

NORTHERN UNDERWATER PHOTOGRAPHY GROUP

NUPG NEWSLETTER Issue #10, Nov2003 – Dec2003

NUPG Web Site: www.nupg.org.uk

Derek Haslam: Minorcan baby jellyfish.

Tropical Macro winner Dec. Xmas 2003 Meeting, BEST OF 2003.



This Issue:

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 - Meeting Dates & Forthcoming Meetings
 - *** New Venue from JUNE2003 ***
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- Future Splash-Ins, Events & Exhibitions
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Issue Contributors: Lucy Kay, Colin Samuel, Tony Gilbert

Date for your Diary: NEXT NUPG MEETING: Mon January 19th 2004, Swan Inn Bucklow Hill, nr Knutsford at 1930 prompt.

Editor: Tony Gilbert, e-mail: NoDecoWarrior@hotmail.com

MEETING DATES & EVENTS for your diary

Pass on the dates to your friends & colleagues who may fancy joining the club.

The Northern Underwater Photography Group

Contact information, meetings & events - Jan 2004 to May 2004.

The NUPG meets regularly throughout the year to increase experience and knowledge of underwater photography. It's fun, informal, informative and fishy!

Date	Meeting place	Time	
Jan 19 th 2004, Monday	Swan Inn (A556, between M6/J19 & M56)	19.30pm	Camera Types
Early 2004 Weekend Day	Venue to be determined. (NUPG 3 rd Annual)	09.00am	Winter Splash-In
Mar 22 nd 2004, Monday	Swan Inn (A556, between M6/J19 & M56)	19.30pm	
May 17 th 2004, Monday	Swan Inn (A556, between M6/J19 & M56)	19.30pm	Annual General Meeting

To find the NUPG Meetings venue please use an A-Z or road map

For further information contact 01248 681361 or 01274 852361 or 01253 395746 and our web site

www.nupg.org.uk

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

19th January 2004 MEETING - CAMERAS

This meeting has been dedicated to the different types of camera equipment and techniques on their usage.

Technical Talks : A short series of technical talks on the various camera systems available, the types of lenses & techniques. Or, to put it another way, "The What Camera Session"

Housed Cameras: Derek Haslam

Wet Cameras (MMII): Tony Gilbert

Digital Cameras: Paul Kay

Guest Speaker : None this meeting

Competition Theme : Anemones

My 5 Slides : By Colin Samuel

Colin has volunteered to start 2004 off with a 5 star helping of his favourite slides. Come on don't be bashful, volunteer for the next meeting – before you are selected!

The Winter Splash-In is being finalised, see Events & Splash-ins

22nd March 2004 MEETING - NATURE

This meeting is dedicated to Nature, in our case underwater.

- Technical Talks** :
Guest Speaker : **Micheal Leach**
He is an above water natural history photographer and he will be talking about how he goes about getting his images, which might give us some interesting ideas for underwater (it'll be different anyway!).
- Competition Theme** : **Animal portraits (underwater)**
My 5 Slides : Will it be your spring bunch on show?

17th May 2004 MEETING - AGM

AGM – COME ALONG – HAVE YOUR SAY.

IF YOU HAVE ANY COMMENTS, OPINIONS, IDEAS, OR ANYTHING TO DISCUSS, OR WANT DECISIONS MADE ABOUT THE CLUB, THEN COME ALONG TO THIS AGM MEETING.

ANY IDEAS NOW, OR WANT TO RAISE ITEMS AT THE NEXT MEETING? THEN E-MAIL THE SECRETARY OR CONTACT ANY MEMBER OF THE COMMITTEE.

- Technical Talks** : **None**
Guest Speaker : **None**
Competition Theme : **TBA**
My 5 Slides : Sooner or later we'll get you, so why not volunteer! The truth and slides are out there...
Winter Splash In : **Cutting and Judging**

MEETING REVIEWS

18th August 2003 Meeting Review

Arranging a meeting in the middle of the holiday season might not have seemed the most sensible move, but a good number of members made it to the August NUPG meeting. Along with the meeting slide competition there were a couple of other competitions covered in the meeting which together with Neil O'May's Fave 5 and Paul Kay providing some technical insight into TTL (although the general conclusion was that the 'put it on TTL and hope' approach to photography is not one to rely on!) provided an interesting and entertaining evening.

Competition Theme : Wide Angle

For those amongst us who generally shoot macro, the world of wide angle can sometimes appear to be a bit of a scary format to work in. Challenging it certainly is (although that goes for underwater photography generally), but it opens up a whole raft of photographic opportunities and the chance to experiment with many different techniques to provide some very different images as shown in this months competition.

1st : Jason Gregory, Bonaire

This atmospheric shot showing a whole wreck in the image with a diver in silhouette at the side giving a sense of the scale of the scene was a worthy winner. The image was taken using primarily available light with a little bit of flash highlighting a sponge at the very front of the wreck.



Taken with a housed Nikon F90 and single flash, using a 16mm fish eye lens.

2nd : Lucy Kay, Ireland County Kerry

Lucy admitted to her fascination with kelp which partly prompted this shot to be taken. The movement of the kelp fronds has been created by using a slow shutter speed but keeping enough stability with the camera to ensure that the dead men's fingers in the foreground are in focus.

Taken with a Nikon F60 in a Subal housing with a 20mm lens and single flash.

Joint 3rd : Paul Webster, Bahamas

This lovely image of Atlantic spotted dolphins was taken in the Bahamas using ambient light with the camera set on aperture priority. Having caught these charismatic mammals in mid turn, you really get a feeling of the amazing experience of getting close to these animals.



Taken with a Canon EOS 50 in a Subal housing with a 14mm lens using ambient light and with the camera set on shutter priority.

Joint 3rd : Steve Smithson, St. Abbs, UK

This image was hot off the press having been taken only 2 weeks ago by the harbour wall at St Abbs. A great composition with the diver by the colourful dead men's fingers on the wall with the added dimension of the diver looking up at a jellyfish.

Taken with a Nikon F90 in Sea and Sea housing using wide-angle lens.

Joint 3rd : Paul Kay, Torran Rocks, off SW Mull, UK

Anemones on a boulder.

Taken with a Nikon F80 in a Subal housing with a 60mm lens

Speaker : Paul Kay on TTL

Paul explained that TTL means Through The Lens and is the descriptive name given to automatic camera-controlled flash exposure. The concept is very simple. A sensor within the camera body actually measures the amount of flashlight received by the film during the actual flash exposure, and, when it senses that the 'correct' amount has been given out by the flash and received by the camera, this sensor then tells the flash to switch off. So it is an automatic regulating flash system.

Like any other, it can be fooled by too bright or too dark a subject so may need the photographer to dial in some exposure compensation. It does take into account things like the magnification, which would otherwise need the amount of flash light to be manually increased. As it requires a multiple connection between flash and camera, it is essential that all connections inside the housing, and between the flash lead and housing and flash itself are all good. So these should be cleaned and kept in good order.

As TTL control takes place in a very short space of time, there is a limit to how quickly this can actually work. There is a minimum time known as the 'quench' time in which TTL can operate. This gives a lower power limit to the system and this is usually described in terms of stops. So a 4 stop TTL system will work down to 1/8 power, a 5 stop to 1/16 and so on. This translates to a unit being able to operate within a restricted range of apertures for any given distance.

My 5 Slides : Neil O'May

Neil was really pleased with the results he'd achieved in taking the shots he showed and this was the main reason he'd selected them as his top 5 (which was actually 6 photos!). All the photos were taken with a manual focus Canon T70 in an Ikelite housing.

1. Grouper – Neil said he felt this was a lucky shot – lucky or not, it was a very pleasing image.
2. Blue-spotted ray – a photograph taken early in Neil's photographic career.
3. Moray – taking this shot involved some underwater acrobatics and finally taking the shot whilst balanced upside down!
4. Diver in water – not your usual diver shot, this image showed a diver in the water just moments after jumping in - the action of the moment caught by the camera.
5. Tiny hermit on an edible crab's shell – this shot, taken in the Menai Strait, won Neil 2nd place in the 2002 NUPG Splash-In – an unusual shot of a very small hermit crab!
6. Lumphead wrasse – taken in available light.

Photo clinic :

This opportunity for members to show some of their photos and canvas other members for their views and comments was well received by all present at the meeting. It provided a useful opportunity for members to seek advice on why certain things had happened with their images and to talk generally about composition, lighting and all manner of other underwater photo issues.

20th October 2003 Meeting Review

Mark Walker presented the Autumnal NUPG Meeting. 15 members attended, with 2 guests who were most welcome. **Meeting report by Colin Samuel.**

Tonight's end-of-summer offerings were two Favourite 5's, an Audio Visual display and a slightly spongy slide competition.

Speaker and Main Presentation

Mark Walker started off by gently relaxing us all with a really first class Audio Visual display of some of his recent work abroad. After almost seducing us into going straight to Alan James and ordering the "Digital Mood Developer Kit!" he enthused his art telling us how this could change the way we looked at not only how to capture the image, but how to manipulate, frame and even get rid of our chosen image, should we wish to!

The presentation ended with the usual "Film vs Digital" arguments, Mark gallantly defending his point of view, and no doubt getting a few converts along the way!

Simon Fielding's Favourite Five

Simon who showed his "Fave5" taken using a Sea & Sea MMII together with close-up lens. Even with relatively cheap equipment Simon demonstrated quiet adequately how good shots can be achieved from both home & abroad.

Paul Webster's "Top of the Photos"

Paul Webster enchanted us all with 5 beautiful prints lit by spotlight, taken in South Africa, using a 3200 speed Black and White film. Using Ambient light it showed what surreal, nay stunning images, can be gained making the viewer closely scrutinise. All images were taken with high shutter speeds and relatively long exposures, using a 14mm lens in a Canon EOS 50, without strobes, casting a different light-so to speak!

(Whether a cheaper, more expensive, digital, wet, housed or video camera is used doesn't matter so much. It's more how the person behind the lens uses it. This meeting showed all the different angles of within the group, and the results speak for themselves with the consistently excellent quality imagery delivered by NUPG members.

See Jan 19th Meeting for a cross-section of equipment currently being used. Ed.)

Competition Theme : Sponges

Sponges were the theme for tonight's contest and 13 slides shown.

1st : Paul Webster

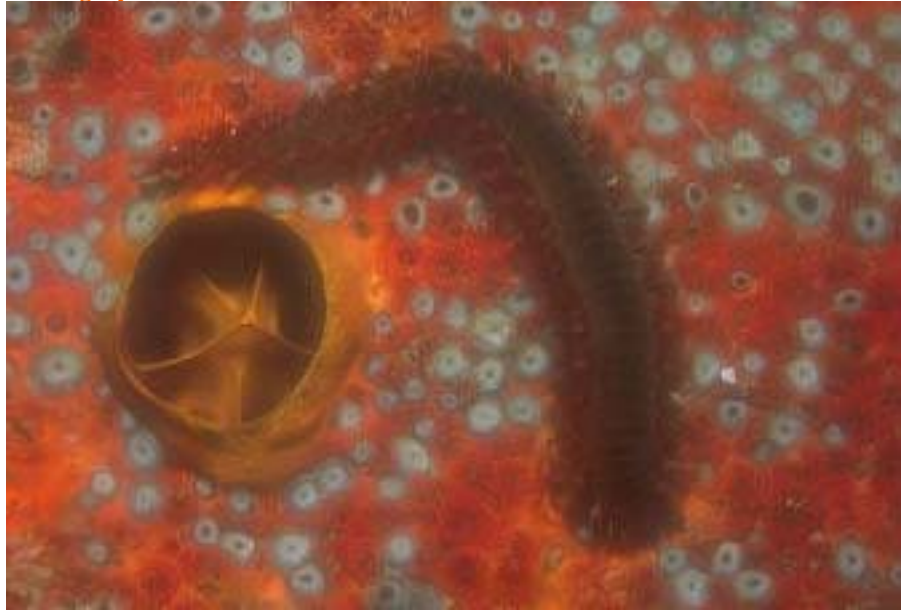
Excellent moody shot of Sea squirts, with side lighting taken in Thailand.



2nd

: Jason Gregory

Superb macro shot of a fire worm at a jaunty angle on soft coral.



3rd

: Paul Webster



A colourful shot this time of a vase sponge with a fish dwelling inside, taken in Mombassa.

1st December 2003 Meeting Review

Members Evening for the Xmas Meeting.

Our December Xmas meeting was held in the Swan Inn at Bucklow Hill, the room bedecked with a motley collection of festive dressings as well as a cheeky selection of images on show!

Around 20 attended the informal format being two mini-talks with slides and an equipment discussion.

Lucy started the meeting off, with a veritable mountain of information...

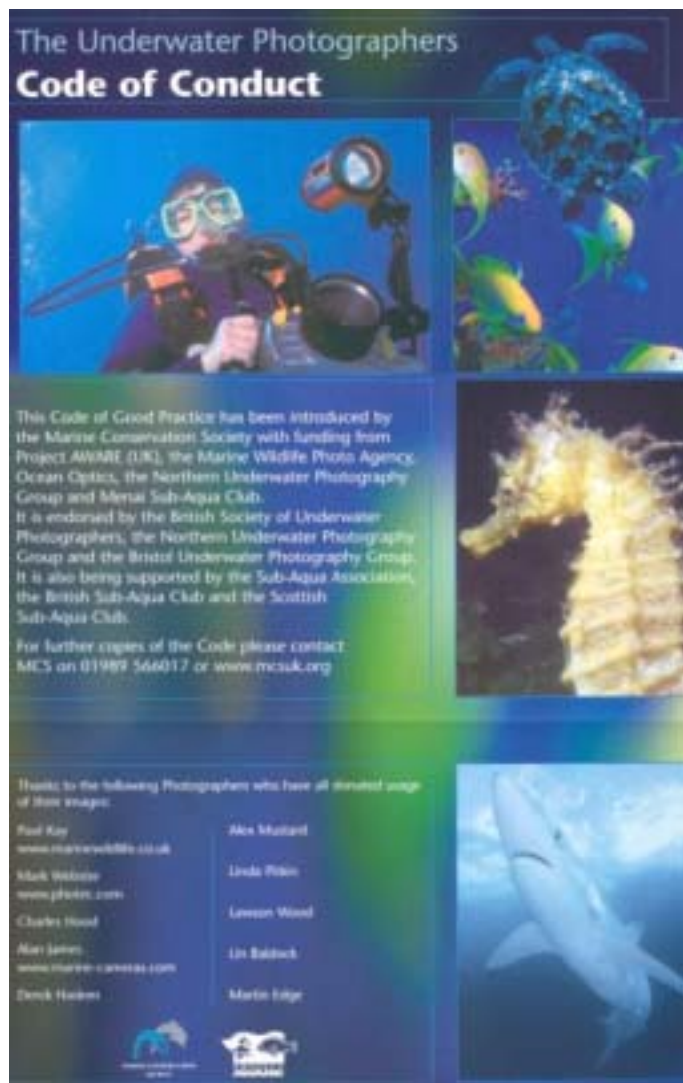
Paul's New Book

Paul brought along a copy his new book, Underwater Photography (a discount to NUPG members). Contains some really superb images and details many photographic techniques, see Paul's website for ordering etc.

Photographers Code of Conduct (or Practice)

Paul also brought along a wad of flyers of the Photographers Code of Conduct, which we as NUPG donated £50 towards. The pullout flyer contains a selection of colourful photographs donated by few well-known photographers (including Derek). It is not just photos though, some of the images are of species particularly susceptible to human practices, and the flyer details the code of conduct (which is also attached to NUPG Newsletter #9).

If you need copies, please contact Paul / Lucy, MCS or www.mcsuk.org website.



Judging of slide comp winners from 2003-04

To give a little bit more of a focus to the monthly meeting competitions, Lucy had organised for all the winners from the May 2002 – March 2003 slide comps to be judged by someone outside of the group, with the aim of making the winning slide into this year's membership card. Ken Sullivan kindly agreed to do the judging and provided feedback on all the slides and his reasons for the slides placed 4th – 1st.

For the 1st place, CONGRATULATIONS go to Derek Haslam for his baby seal photo taken at Porth Ysgaden, North Wales. Ken's comments on this image were: "Lovely shot of the seal at 'the peak of the action'. Focus where it matters with the soft focus on the body, enhancing the face, which is 'the picture'". Very nice shot! This image has now become the NUPG membership card for 2003-04 (See Membership Cards below).

The slides placed 2nd – 4th were:

2nd: Cuttlefish over sand, Lanzarote by Paul Kay
(winner of the May '02 comp (Cephalopoda (Squid, octopuss & cuttlefish))

3rd: Snakelocks anemone, the Mewstone, Plymouth by Mark Thomas
(winner of the November '02 comp (the colour GREEN))

4th: Flatfish face by Derek Haslem
(winner of the January '03 comp (eyes and mouths))

Membership Cards

In case you missed it during previous meetings, a new one is replacing the old membership card. Don't worry your membership is still valid until May 2004. The new card is similar in format to the old, however, has a NUPG image gracing it – more specifically a Derek's cuddly baby seal image, as judged above.



Collect your new card at future meetings.

Future Meetings & Events

If you have any ideas, subjects or can suggest anyone who you would like as a guest speaker, or even talk yourself, please let one of the committee members know. It's in all our interests to keep the show on the road.

Winter Splash-In

Following on from the great success of the previous Winter Splash-In, Ken "volunteered" to organise another during Winter 2004.

Come on NUPG Members, support your club, come on and join with us in the next NUPG Winter Splash-In being held in a place near ALL of us. It's not that cold in early spring, gives us photographers time to iron out the winter photographic bugs, and a chance to catch up on gossip!

Summer Splash-In: The REAL trophy

After a showing of the placed slides from the summer Splash-In (reported in the last newsletter), the REAL Splash-In trophy was finally handed over to Dave Buckley to remain on Cheshire soil until next year!

NEW North Wales Diving Book

A new book about diving in North Wales has been published: 'Underwater Guide to North Wales - Volume 1: Barmouth to Southstack'. This book has been written and produced by Chris Holden - a very enthusiastic diver who has been diving around North Wales for many years. This is the first volume in a series of dive guides for North Wales. It includes an amazing amount of information about many varied dive sites within the locality and Chris has double and triple checked things like the current state of named launch sites, the DGPS positions and slack tide information for the dive sites in the book. If you dive North Wales, you will like this book.

Paul Kay had brought along some copies for sale to the NUPG meeting, but you can see what the book looks like and the information it contains at www.calgopublications.co.uk where there is also information about how to get hold of a copy (£16.95 + p&p).

Competition Theme :

Best of 2003 (open slides of 2003)

The format of this meeting required a minimum of a degree in mathematics to figure out the complex scoring system employed in the end-of-year photo competition. That's if you had remembered to bring the requisite amount of slides!

The theme of tonight's competition was of "Best of Year 2003" in both Temperate (Macro & Wide Angle) and Tropical (Macro & Wide Angle), giving people a chance to supply up to two images per category.

The submissions were varied with mainly UK macro for the temperate; there were more entries of each for the Tropical selection. The conclusion drawn from this is that most members are earning far too much money going off on these exotic diving trips! It was noted though that UK wide-angle images were few and far between, perhaps because of the more challenging conditions in producing good results. (It was interesting to note this trend as 90% of my photography this year (around 2500 images) has been wide-angle and mainly in the UK. Ed.)

One winning image was chosen from each category, and a bottle of wine awarded to the winner. Well done to the winners and all entrants.



Temperate Wide-Angle: Derek Haslam

A wide-angle shot, in the UK, in March 2003 at the NUPG splash-in provided this year's winner. It was of a trout set against a blue water background and sunburst. So, come on down to the Winter Splash-In, if you're not in – you don't win!



Temperate Macro: Ken Byrne

Porth Ysgaden & Trefor Pier images have featured many times over the last year. Perhaps we should organise a day photo trip? Ken's shot was of (dare I say it) a Tompot Blennie suitably positioned in a diagonal pose, as if it knew it was having its picture taken!

**Tropical Wide-Angle:
Paul Webster**

Amongst the wide-angle shots of divers, triggerfish, wrecks, was Paul's image from the Maldives. The silhouette of an eagle ray far above, surrounded by myriad fish and a blue sky provided Paul with this opportunity.



**Tropical Macro:
Derek Haslam**

Another, "hic!", bottle of wine for Derek with a baby jellyfish curling around the water column. Taken in Minorca, Derek went on to say he was stung a few times by the tentacles, but heh, no pain no gain! ... and you can see it hasn't done him any harm!

(also featured on the front-cover, this issue)

Speakers : **Colin Samuel**
(see below) **Paul Webster**
Tony Gilbert

The first talk entitled “**People**” was from Colin Samuels...

Colin’s chosen subject piqued the curiosity of us all, especially when the first photo out was of his son making strange shapes in a swimming pool. The theme of the talk was photographing people in water, whether snorkelling, swimming or diving. Taken in several locations around the world, the slide show provided us insights into how Colin’s minds work (!), and what works for him. Should the subject’s “eyes” be seen or not, started a heated debate. Finally it was decided that perhaps it didn’t matter too much providing the image & composition was what the photographer was looking for.

Shots included Pool scenes in a Red Sea swimming pool, diving down from a boat in Bonaire, a selection of images from an Alan James photo workshop. Colin also strove to discuss the “impromptu groups or solo divers” who occasionally pass by overhead, providing opportunistic shots.

A wolfish and diver were rehearsed on land in the form of “storyboards” before getting into St. Abbs waters and meeting up with “Wolfie” at Big Green Carr. (Glad to see that someone else does storyboards. Ed.)

Finally a selection of images of “divers-at-work” Vivian, Dorothea and Capernwray, closely followed by a bottom flasher entitled “rear of the year” (image withheld from publication, owing to the fact it was too funny)!

“**Light Metering Strobes**”, by Paul Webster

Well if you thought you needed a degree in maths for the slide comp, you also needed degrees in applied & natural physics for Paul’s talk (only joking).

Paul chose perhaps a subject, which we are all interested in, light metering, especially underwater, in order to get the best out of our camera and strobes. Many cameras have in built light meters but there are not many hand-held inexpensive light meters on the market. The metering of light is important both above and below the water, and Paul applied his topside experience to its suggested uses underwater.

The discussion talk centred around metering the output of light delivered by strobe lights as it is important to know how much light delivery a strobe is going to make, whether on half, full power or TTL.

- A strobe’s “Guide Number” is used to describe the power output of a flash gun and also its angle of coverage.
- $G = A * D$ (where G= guide number, A=aperture setting, D= distance).
- The guide values shown on a strobe can differ on where the strobe has been bought, as the units are either metric or Imperial (for USA).
- After some experimentation by Paul the manufacturers Guide Number (for land use) drops by two stops when a strobe is used on half-power. If F22 it went to F11.
- Strobe lights deteriorate over time, in their capacity & output delivery. There is also a tendency for them to have hotspots in the centre or less light at the edges. This may mean getting in closer to the subject to light it properly.
- Different strobes deliver different light coverage. Some spread light in cone patterns, others slightly diffused, others flat. The smoother the coverage the more expensive the strobe.
- Using one or two strobes could greatly affect the light coverage, however, it was noted that two strobes the same would not deliver twice the output (a formula was presented), but about 1.5 times.
- $A = (G * \text{SqRoot} (\text{ISO} / 100)) / D$. This formulae works on land, however, divide the resultant by 2 or 3 for underwater use.

Paul went on to meter a selection of member’s strobes. The subject is open for further experimentation and discussion, so if anyone has any points to make or results from experimentation let us know – in the Newsletter!

“Resume”, by Tony Gilbert

Breaking away from the traditional slide talk formats of holiday destinations, techniques, Tony embarked upon a different subject matter.

NUPG this year has had 3 main external events aside from meetings, these being two splash-ins and an exhibition at Penrhyn Castle. Tony had taken photographs of each of these events and combined these terrestrial shots with a selection of splash-in images he'd taken.

This was to illustrate how the activities went and to raise the awareness of these and of all the hard work put in by the organisers of the events.

The winter splash-in showed just how fair the conditions were for photography in March. Some images illustrated how much of a “Norman” look Penrhyn Castle has and showed the exhibition rooms. The summer splash-in included a selection of images from the splash in dive and subsequent dives made by NUPG members. The weather was glorious all day, and a record of the evenings judging and awards shown.

NUPG MEMBERS NEWS

Visions 2003. NUPG Members Speaking and attending.

See Colin's full report in Reports, a really interesting read! Colin, along with Jason Gregory, Paul & Lucy Kay, Roy & Pat Cash, Paul Webster all went to Visions (may be others as well), so it was well represented by NUPG members. Perhaps a NUPG outing for next year – all go down by bouncy charabanc!!!

Jason Gregory wins awards

Jason earlier this year cleaned up and won several awards at the St. Abbs splash-in held during August Bank Holiday.

Marine Life Portrait: 1st Prize Jason Gregory, Scorpion Fish.

Diver Scenic: 1st Prize Jason Gregory, Buddies.

Overall Winner: Jason Gregory, Buddies.

Steve Smithson wins award

Steve has just recently won an award in Sport Diver Magazine (See Dec 2003 Sport Diver), within the “Project Aware Professional” Category. The category theme of camouflage was demonstrated to great effect by Steve's image of a dresser crab.

Mark Walker Highly Commended

It's been a successful year for NUPG members, as Mark was Highly Commended in the Diver Magazine's Image 2003 awards recently, with his “Dory Snappers”.

Top 5 NUPG Dive Destinations? NUPG Members favour The Canary Islands?

Tony Gilbert spent two weeks of November in Lanzarote on holiday & book research, taking around 1000 images, the water a warm 22C, with brilliant sunshine throughout. In December Lucy, Paul, Colin & Gail visited El Hierro (I hear taking just as many images), whilst more or less at the same time Charles & Jennifer Wolstenholme were visiting La Palma. These latter two islands are virtually untouched, remote and small. Little diving takes place on them, so it'll be interesting to note how they all get on, and what subjects they find to photograph!

(On Paul's return all I've been able to get out of him was brilliant, amazing awesome and took 77 shots per dive – says it all really. Ed)

So, perhaps with this amount of interest shown around the Canaries, maybe we should organise a club trip?

FUTURE Splash-Ins, Events & Exhibitions

Events (other than splash-ins)

None currently planned, however, if any of our readers have any suggestions they would like to make, or even organise an event, don't hesitate, contact a member of the committee.

Exhibitions

None currently planned, however, if any of our readers have any suggestions they would like to make, exhibition venues perhaps, or even organise an exhibition, don't hesitate, contact a member of the committee.

WINTER SPLASH-IN, SATURDAY, 27TH MARCH 2004 CAPERNWRAY QUARRY, NEAR LANCASTER



The 3rd Winter Splash-In is being organised once again by KEN BYRNE. The splash-ins give you a chance to meet up with fellow NUPG members and practice photography before the main UK diving season starts. You too can photograph “Mr Froggie & Friends” in the gnome garden, or see if you can find Nessie in his winter retreat.

Splash-In Details:



Winner of last year's splash-in at Capernwray, was Luey's shot of rainbow trout – can you surpass this??

Meeting time will be 09:00 and KEN BYRNE will be collecting in the films until 13:00. Provide your own slide film and the cost is £6 to cover processing. The first frame of your film should be a self-portrait or a slate with your name on.

KEN will return the films at the next NUPG meeting when selection, projection and judging will take place. Note: the images will be already pre-mounted.

(Note: Details may change slightly nearer the date)

Capernwray (Jackdaw Quarry) Details:

A freshwater quarry within easy reach, just north of Lancaster. With a max. depth of 21m contains a fascinating collection of sites at various depths. There is a gnome garden, zebra mussels, numerous fish species & rainbow trout, along with some interesting quarry ridges. Air/Nitrox on site, opening time is normally 0900.

If you've not been to Capernwray before/recently it costs £2 for lifetime registration and you will need proof of diving qualification, in addition to registration it is £6 per visit.

Additional information following on from a recent visit...

The visibility was a stunning 12-15m+ especially on the more distant attractions, but varies according to time of year. Two new attractions have been added. A sturgeon fish (see if you can find it), and an underwater habitat. The water is blue/green at present and many rainbow trout have grown in size. Entry via pier platform or concrete mini-jetty, west slip (entry/exit), east slip (entry/exit point – careful of sunken rocks).

Clubhouse

A new clubhouse facility has opened within the last year, which proves extremely popular with divers. It contains the Dive Centre & Shop and a Cafe-Bar serving food & drinks at reasonable prices. The original bacon-buttie van has moved inside and all the old greasy favourites are there, like sausage egg bacon barmes etc. as well as some new selections, for the more discerning pallet! **You can find more information about Capernwray at: www.dive-site.co.uk**



REPORTS & ARTICLES

Summer 2003

Splash-In Images

An excellent set of images on the day...

WINNER: Dave Buckley



Ginger's shot of a tompot blenny,
they're always around when you need
one!

Joint 2nd: Tony Gilbert



UK Wide Angle shots are not as prolific, but well represented in NUPG.

A shot of a “Diver Investigating wreckage and gully”

Joint 2nd: Mark Walker

Tompots rule the roost, the only other remaining tompot in North Wales. Sadly, we don't have an image for this one, but it was a great shot nonetheless.

Joint 3rd: Neil Morris

This bollard in the wreckage of the *Hermine*, along with its sunstar provided another wide-angle opportunity.



Joint 3rd: Lucy Kay

Lucy's incredible talking Edible Crab.

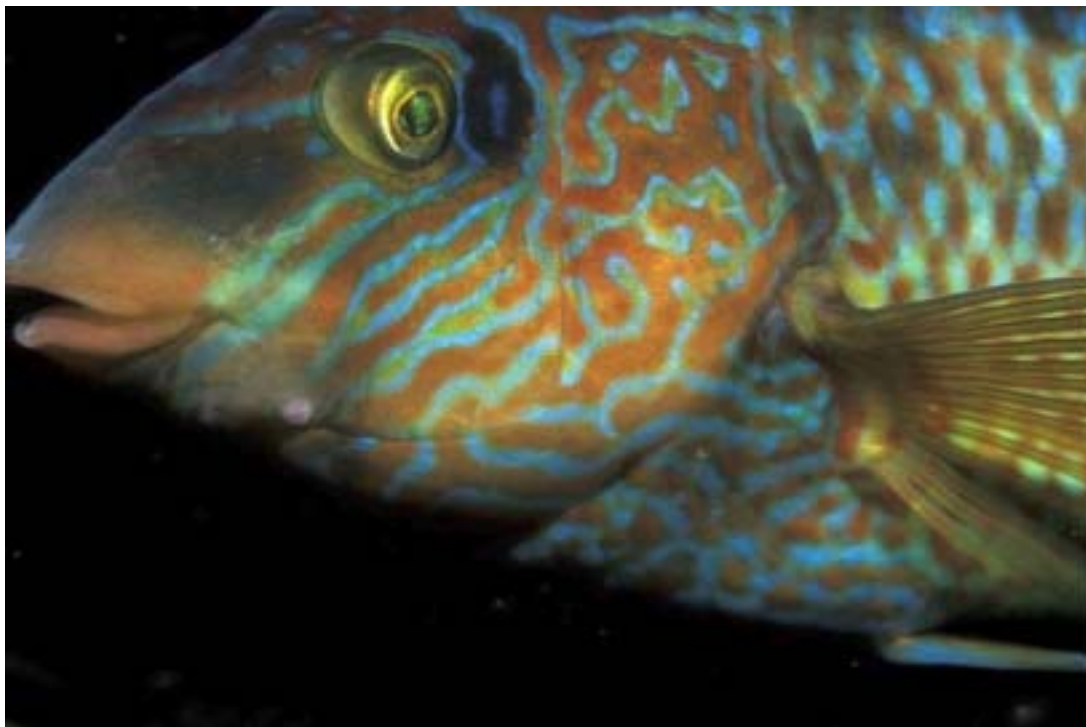


Joint 4th: Alan James

Nice shallow scenic in the fields of weeds & grasses.



Joint 4th: Colin Samuel's. inquisitive corkwing wrasse.



VISIONS 2003

Report, by Colin Samuel

It sounded good enough for me, the chance to attend the Annual Underwater photofest that is Visions. Apparently it's a change of venue this year it's at Kings College, Waterloo, London, the 7th year in succession. Chaired by Colin Doeg from BSOUP, although thanks be given to Steve Warren and the staff at Ocean Optics for the background work.

My first time and Jason's second. Once we got there some 30 minutes late Amous Nachoum was in full swing. The seating area was full to capacity with I would estimate over 200 people in attendance, Amous astounded us all not only with excellent 'How in the hell did he get that shot!' type photos, but his sheer enthusiasm for his work. He deliberately tailors his more remote location trips to a maximum of 4 people.

Various guest speakers gave mini talks lasting approximately half an hour, our very own **Roy Cash** gave us one of the more memorable talks on a recent visit to the Philippines which went down well, there were more one from a guy who seemed to think a tour of the best coffee houses in the Maldives would enthrall us all.

After a decent break, Alex Mustard then gave an energetic tour of Digital Cameras and the various effects and manipulations you can achieve, provided of course, you can afford it!

Another of our hobby's Grand Masters then took to the floor, Martin Edge. He enthused about some of the work he'd done, explaining to each of us exactly how such spellbinding images were created. He spoke of super macro i.e. 200mm lenses, about dioptries and split level shots! There was even a technique of using a normal lens backwards!!

The remainder of the afternoon continued after dinner with various Awards to Alex Mustard and Colin Doeg, for their work with "The Young Underwater Photographer Club".

After another coffee break, Simon Brown enthralled all with his slides taken at home and abroad. If I remember correctly, he told us he was glad he didn't give up his day job, what with young family etc.

Pete Atkinson, who incidentally to me, seems to have just about the world's best job, photographing, young scantily clad blonde beauties in the South Pacific, from his own Yacht! Some of his underwater shots weren't too bad either!

The Evening "do" was emotively presented by Tony White who showed truly remarkable shots of (mainly) Leafy Sea Dragons, superb throughout.

Colin Doeg ,after teasing us all day with quips like "He may be here, but we can't promise anything", or "I think he's in the building" now finally confessed "It's my great pleasure to introduce to you all.....the one and only David Doubilet!" (Well, you'd have thought Jonny Wilkinson had entered). He took complete control for over an hour, nobody dared to cough, or even move a chair for fear of interrupting the great man. It was of course his latest almost pocket sized book, Fish Face. He talked of high-energy lighting systems which were set up to obtain such "painting with light" images.

Sunday.

Colin Doeg (MC) informs us that David Doubilet is presently winging his way back to the USA, and what a coup it was for us to get him here.

Espen Rekdal, who infuriatingly enough is still in his 20`s guided us through slides taken in his home country of Norway. Absolutely terrific imagery for such a young man. Espen is producing shots of such calibre it leaves you open-mouthed. Check his website out.

Marine Biologist, Paul Naylor treated us to an informative explanation of a good selection of UK critters, taken in an ID format, with detailed explanations of where to find, best times to dive etc.

Arthur Hunking, predominantly a land photographer, until a few years ago delighted us with his work.

Launching his latest, and well overdue book **Paul Kay** presented a terrific explanation of how he produces such constantly good work. It has to be said some of Paul's images did get debate going, young pretender Espen Rekdal and others casting their "green eyes" over some of his work, he can fight his own corner, but Paul was assisted by Amous Noucham who backed him up stating that it doesn't matter this rule of thirds, and what's all that crap about diagonals anyway?

Next John Collins took us all to the completely (well almost completely) silent world of this new fangled re-breather system. We all know it preceded the aqua lung and John's convincing talk did it for me, except that is for the price-a bit like the digital argument. Although giving off bubbles every 5-6 breaths does interest me.

Up next, again taking us to places most of us would hesitate to go was Leigh Bishop who expertly delivered a master class in deep diving techniques, and in addition to that at 130+ metres, he finds time to not only set up a tripod but time lapse his images as well! This bloke with his natural down to earth way of delivery took us on trips to some of the worlds best wrecks making it all sound so easy.

Amous Nachoum rounded off the 2nd day with more plugs for his bespoke courses, including lots of topside trips including Kenyan safaris and the Falkland Islands. This man generates the feeling in you that makes you grab your camera and get out and use it creatively and with imagination, as National Geographic have repeatedly noticed, who would ever have thought of shooting breaching Great Whites for instance.

Conclusion.

All in all, what a great Conference it was showing complete diversity of subjects, re-breathers, digital, deep diving and is it worth giving up the day job? What I found particularly good was the chance to meet other people who shared our great passion. During lunch some of the speakers i.e. Paul Kay, Martin Edge and Amous Nachoum found time to give critiques of other peoples work, what could be better!

Gripes-yes I have one or two. The seating was mostly on the same level, except for the back 5 rows or so, which made life a little difficult if you had the Harlem GlobeTrotters sat in front. Also the communal projector was roughly in the middle of the floor so most of the speakers were next to it, facing the front speaking at the side with most of the audience being behind. Lastly, the meal deserves special mention it wasn't the best. Meat and two veg with an over the top pear sorbet or something or other!

ARTICLES

If you have a small piece you would like to see included in the Newsletter, please send it in .rtf format to the Editor and maybe a selection of images. It can be humorous, something about underwater photography, an interesting slant on diving, whatever really.

LINKS

If you have any photo-type web links you wish to share, let us know... (Also see previous issue(s) for many others).



St. Abbs Splash-In Images: www.marine-reserve.co.uk/activities/splashin2003.htm

St. Abbs Marine Reserve's Web site, plenty of information in here, and many photos past and present from the splash-in's. St. Abbs is a great place for photography especially from the shoreline as the sites just off shore, like Big Green Carr and Cathedral lend themselves well.



Let's Get Crabby : www.tmu.uit.no/crustikon/Index.htm

Here's is the home page explanation...

Crustikon is a scientific, non-profit crustacean website focused on photography, consisting of two independent sub-sites.

- A pictorial guide to the Crustacea Decapoda (shrimps, lobsters and crabs) of the Eastern Atlantic, the Mediterranean Sea and the adjacent continental waters, including brief information on their distribution and ecology, as well as identification references.
- A pictorial guide to the Crustacea Amphipoda of northern Europe (in preparation)

This site is intended both for biologists and non-professional naturalists. Over 500 photographs of about 200 decapod species have been selected, but their complete loading on the site will probably need a few months. In a later stage, this online decapod photographic catalogue could be expanded through the help of external collaborators



Awesome Imagery: www.theoceanlife.com

Carlos Suarez's website. If you want to see some really superb images produced by Carlos then take a look here. Carlos frequently dives around Lanzarote and I met up with him in November aboard an excursion boat going to the Lanzarote World Biosphere's Marine Nature Reserve in the North, The Chinijo Archipelago. He uses quite a sophisticated housed camera system, one of the most serious pieces of equipment I've seen! The results of his work are really amazing, many of his images were made in Lanzarote. Have a look at the grouper (mero) close up, the red dendrophillia coral & diver, and the Red Sea lionfish set against a rich blue background with sunburst. His attention to detail, composition & lighting is outstanding as can be seen by these images, bringing a fresh approach to underwater photography. I think within NUPG, we could all learn from his work. Carlos also is a photo-journalist and has written for some of the popular Spanish dive magazines, with subjects such as the Lanzarote wreck park and other Lanzarotian sites.

ADVERTS

If you have any equipment for sale and would like to advertise, please let us know.

HANDOUTS & ATTACHMENTS